

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAGU 01654 301521Z

53

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 OFA-01 L-02

H-02 OES-05 ARAE-00 EB-07 SCA-01 SCSE-00 DLOS-05

CG-00 DOTE-00 SS-15 TRSE-00 NSC-05 /066 W

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O 301455Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6849

INFO AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS MANAGUA 1654

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CPRS, NU

SUBJECT: SEIZURE OF U.S. FISHING VESSEL "SUGAR DADDY"

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 1660

1. THE AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED THE SUBJECT OF THE VESSEL "SUGAR DADDY" WITH PRESIDENT SOMOZA, APRIL 29. HE EXPRESSED HIS WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE IN EVERY POSSIBLE WAY AND REQUESTED THAT THE EMBASSY WORK CLOSELY WITH THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE. THE AMBASSADOR, MILITARY ATTACHE, AND CONSULAR OFFICER HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH COLONEL SANCHEZ, GON MINISTER OF DEFENSE, AND THE MILITARY ATTACHE HAS SPOKEN BY RADIO WITH DUTY OFFICER OF NICARAGUAN COAST GUARD IN EL BLUFF ON NICARAGUAN EAST COAST. DUTY OFFICER ADVISED ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS POSED GOWAN/WARNER TELECON AND LAZAR/SHELTON TELCON ARE AS FOLLOWS; AND THESE ANSWERS HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS PRESENTED PERSONALLY TO AMBASSADOR AND EMBASSY OFFICERS BY MINISTER OF DEFENSE.

A. AT TIME THAT VESSEL WAS INTERCEPTED AND SEIZED IT WAS FLYING NO REPEAT NO FLAG OF ANY DESCRIPTION.

B. THOSE WHO PICKED UP VESSEL WERE MEMBERS OF NICARAGUAN
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PAGE 02 MANAGU 01654 301521Z

NATIONAL GUARD AND THEREFORE WERE ACTING OFFICIALLY. THEY EMPHASIZE,

HOWEVER, THAT THEY HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY DISTURBED BY HONDURAN AND JAMAICAN FISHING BOATS ENCOACHING IN THIS AREA.

C. ONLY DOCUMENTATION WHICH COAST GUARD DUTY OFFICER CONFIRMED THAT HE WAS AWARE ON BOAT WAS HONDURAN. MINISTER OF DEFENSE HAS ADVISED THAT OFFICIAL RECORDS OF GON STATE THAT VESSEL IS HONDURAN REGISTRY R5773, BUT THAT CAPTAIN OF VESSEL CLAIMED THAT IT WAS AMERICAN OWNED.

D. CITIZENSHIP OF CAPTAIN OF BOAT IS HONDURAN. ENTIRE CREW IS EITHER HONDURAN OR NICARAGUAN. NO U.S. CITIZENS ABOARD VESSEL.

E. VESSEL WAS APPREHENDED ON APRIL 17, APPROXIMATELY 11:00 AM 35 MILES EAST OF MISQUITO CAY.

F. AS FAR AS MINISTER OF DEFENSE IS AWARE, NO SENTENCE HAS BEEN LEVIED AGAINST VESSEL AS YET. DIRECTOR OF NATURAL RESOURCES HAS BEEN REQUESTED TO INVESTIGATE AND REPORT FINDINGS.

G. CATCH ABOARD VESSEL HAS BEEN DEPOSITED AT BOOTH FISHERIES AT EL BLUFF.

2. IT APPEARS CLEAR FROM ANSWERS EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED THAT AT TIME OF SEIZURE NO FLAG OR DOCUMENTATION INDICATED TO NICARAGUAN AUTHORITIES US OWNERSHIP OF BOAT. POSSESSION OF HONDURAN REGISTRY WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE INDICATED THAT IT WAS HONDURAN. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT IF USG CAN AUTHORIZE US TO ADVISE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT THAT BOAT IS US VESSEL, AND IF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF AMERICAN OWNER MAKES APPROPRIATE CLAIM, GON MIGHT WELL BE WILLING TO RELEASE VESSEL WITHOUT PENALTIES. IT SHOULD FURTHER BE EMPHASIZED THAT AS OF THIS DATE, NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT HAS RECEIVED NO COMMUNICATION FROM EITHER THE OWNER, OR THE HONDURAN FISHING COMPANY REGARDING THIS VESSEL.

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Message Attributes

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